very nature, customs, ideology and history.

175 721 Slowly the memories of the civil war began to be forgotten and the resources of the country were concentrated in constructive

175 181 work. As an independent state Finland showed amazing economic and social progress. In the thirties Finland undoubtedly was one of the happiest countries in the world. Her living standard rose steadily, she had become almost self-supporting, communism as a political party was abolished, and fascism was too alien to the Finnish nature to become an important political factor. At the outbreak of World War II the unanimous desire in Finland was to keep out of the fight. But unfortunately

175 721 that proved impossible. In her policy of Westward expansion, Russia had long regarded Finland as an obstacle; in turn, the Finns had

consistently presented a united front against Russian aggression, as it was commonly felt that the very survival of the nation was at stake. Russia, no doubt, had planned originally to appeal to the memories of 1918. But is became at once evident that the wounds of that time had been healed, and the Finnish nation demonstrated now an amazing unanimity of purpose which was surprising even to itself. The nation rallied around the now almost legendary figure of Field Marshal Mannerheim, and, in the Winter War of 1939-40, this nation of four million people, practically unaided, led a successful campaign against an aggressor fifty times its size--a glories chapter in the history of Finland.

Finland cannot escape the map. It is a